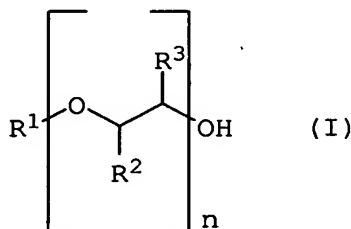


IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) Polymeric capable of absorbing blood and/or body fluids ~~and~~ comprising
- a) at least one interpolymerized ethylenically unsaturated acid-functional monomer,
 - b) at least one interpolymerized crosslinker,
 - c) ~~if appropriate~~ optionally one or more interpolymerized ethylenically and/or allylically unsaturated monomers copolymerizable with a),
 - d) ~~if appropriate~~ optionally one or more water-soluble polymers onto which said monomers a), b), and ~~if appropriate~~ optionally c) are at least partially grafted, and
 - e) ~~if appropriate~~ optionally one or more reacted postcrosslinkers,

wherein said polymeric particles are coated with at least one surfactant and with at least one solvent of the general formula \pm (I)



~~where~~ wherein

R¹ is C₁-C₆-alkyl with or without halogen substitution,

R², and R³ are independently hydrogen or methyl, and

n is an integer from 0 to 5.

2. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles ~~according to~~ of claim 1 wherein the surfactant is a nonionic surfactant having an HLB value in the range from 2 to 18.

3. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles ~~according to~~ of claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the solvent is a compound of the general formula \pm (I) ~~where~~ wherein

R^1 is C_2-C_6 -alkyl,

R^2 , and R^3 are each hydrogen, and

n is an integer from 1 to 3.

4. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles ~~according to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 3~~ that are further coated with at least one multivalent metal cation.

5. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles ~~according to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 4~~ wherein the multivalent metal cation is an aluminum cation.

6. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles ~~according to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 5~~ that are characterized by a blood absorbance of at least 15 g/g in the dry state.

7. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles ~~according to any of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 6~~ that are ~~not posterosslinked~~ free of postcrosslinking.

8. (Currently amended) A mixture of polymeric particles ~~according to any of claims 1 to 6~~ wherein not less than 20% by weight of said polymeric particles are ~~not postcrosslinked~~ free of postcross-linking.

9. (Currently amended) A process for producing polymeric particles capable of absorbing blood and/or body fluids by an addition polymerization of a mixture of

a) at least one ethylenically unsaturated acid-functional monomer ~~which may wherein~~ each be is optionally at least partially neutralized,

b) at least one crosslinker,

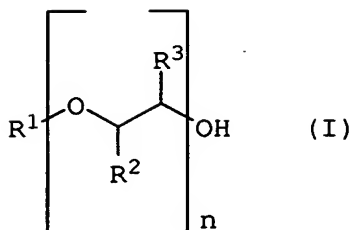
c) ~~if appropriate~~ optionally one or more ethylenically and/or allylically unsaturated monomers copolymerizable with a),

d) ~~if appropriate~~ optionally one or more water-soluble polymers onto which said monomers, a), b), and ~~if appropriate~~ optionally c) may be at least partially grafted,

the base polymer obtained being dried, classified and

e) ~~if appropriate~~ optionally after-treated with one or more postcrosslinkers and dried,

which comprises the dried polymeric particles being aftertreated with at least one surfactant and with at least one solvent of the general formula \pm (I)



where wherein

R¹ is C₁-C₆-alkyl with or without halogen substitution,

R², and R³ are independently hydrogen, methyl or ethyl, and

n is an integer from 0 to 20.

10. (Currently amended) The process ~~according to~~ of claim 9 wherein said dried polymeric particles are aftertreated with ~~the~~ a solution ~~of~~ containing at least one multivalent metal cation.

11. (Currently amended) The process ~~according to~~ of claim 9 ~~or 10~~ wherein the dried base polymer is classified such that the polymeric particles are less than 500 μm in particle size.

12. (Currently amended) The process ~~according to any of claims~~ claim 9 ~~to 11~~ wherein a solution of said surfactant in said solvent is sprayed onto said polymeric particles.

13. (Currently amended) The process ~~according to any of claims~~ claim 9 ~~to 12~~ wherein an aqueous solution ~~of said~~ comprising a multivalent metal cation is sprayed onto said polymeric particles.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) A hygiene article comprising polymeric particles ~~according to any of~~ elaims claim 1 ~~to~~ 8.